

26330 to 26343—Continued.

Rockhill before he left Pekin for St. Petersburg, Russia. Plants received at the Plant Introduction Garden, Chico, Cal., December 1, 1909; seeds received at Washington, D. C., December 6, 1909.

Plants of the following:

26330 to 26332. From the Kienning district.

26330. *Lotus Heart.*

26332. *Dragon Pool.*

26331. *Water Fairy.*

26333 to 26336. From Wuishan district, the cliff-grown teas from River of the Nine Windings.

26333. *White Cock Comb.*

26335. *Superior.*

26334. *Great Red Robe.*

26336. *Dragon Pool.*

Seeds of the following:

26337. *Water Fairy* (parent plant).

26338. *Dragon Pool* (parent plant).

26339. *Dragon Pool.* From Heaven Sauntering Place.

26340. *White Cock Comb* (parent plant).

26341. *Red Robe* (parent plant).

26342. *Red Robe.* From Heaven Heart Temple.

26343. *White Peony* (parent plant).

“The cliff-grown teas are extremely rare and valuable, and I do not believe can be obtained again, as the Chinese are not at all anxious to have the tea of this district become general. The department having for some years past written for seed of the ‘Dragon Pool teas,’ which I was unable to obtain otherwise, though repeated requests have been made, I sent my vice-consul, Mr. Nightingale, and through the extreme courtesy of the viceroy of Fukien, the magistrate of Chungan, and two mandarin friends, he was allowed to gather seeds and select the plants I send. There is 200 miles of foot journey besides considerable boat trip from Foochow to this district, which involves some expense. The peculiar flavor of these cliff-grown teas is said to come from the soil, and other soil may impart an entirely different flavor to the same plant. The earth about the cliff teas is very sandy and not at all rich. A rich soil they claim is not good for tea, as the plant will grow too high and not remain stunted, as is considered desirable. In this district frost occurs often, and now and then there is light fall of snow, which lasts but a short time. The entire district of the River of the Nine Windings is composed of huge red sandstone cliffs and boulders, and in the shadow and clefts of these, wherever a little of the sandy soil is found, the tea grows. Other than a little digging about the roots at this season of the year (October), no attention is necessary.

“Some fertilize the plants once or twice a year with night soil; the fertilization is not considered necessary.

“Some plants produce as many as four kinds of tea, according to the size of the leaf and the time of gathering. The teas of this district in order of superiority are ‘White Cock Comb,’ ‘Great Red Robe,’ ‘Superior,’ ‘Lotus Heart,’ ‘Water Fairy,’ and ‘Dragon Pool.’ The White Cock Comb and the Red Robe plants were those growing closest to the original plant. The White Cock Comb is said to be ‘the original tea plant and to have fallen from heaven;’ twice a year the Chungan magistrate comes to see that it is all right and worship at a neighboring temple. The Dragon Pool tea plants are from a little inclosure back of this temple, where a brother of an emperor in the Sung dynasty retired at one time to raise tea, and which I believe has given rise to the story of the